

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION

- **1 John 1:5-7 NLT** - *This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. 6 So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. 7 But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.*
- The focus of this series is verse 7, but the context of verse 7 is established in the two previous verses so we have to take a moment to appreciate the context.
- **1 John 1:5-6 AMP** - *This is the message [of God's promised revelation] which we have heard from Him and now announce to you, that God is Light [He is holy, His message is truthful, He is perfect in righteousness], and in Him there is no darkness at all [no sin, no wickedness, no imperfection]. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness [of sin], we lie and do not practice the truth.*
- Real fellowship with God inevitably affects the way we live our lives.
- **QUOTE:** *The light of the love and goodness of God is so powerful that it's **impossible** to stand under that light and remain unchanged.*
- We either fall in love with the light and get increasingly uncomfortable with the dark shadows still trying to cling to our character – OR – we fade back to our old life in darkness.
- **John 3:19 NLT** - *And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.*
- **QUOTE:** *You can't close the distance between you and God without that choice creating more distance between you and ungodly things*

- **1 John 1:7 NLT** - *But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.*
- The big idea that we want to unpack this month is this:
- **QUOTE:** *The health of our vertical relationship with God is reflected in our horizontal relationships with people*
- In other words, **CLOSE TO HIM = CLOSE TO THEM**
- To repeat 3 key points from our introduction:
 - *Real fellowship with God inevitably affects the way we live our lives (i.e. function in relationships)*
 - *It's **impossible** to live in the light and (our relationships) remain unchanged.*
 - *God's light exposes the dark shadows hiding in our character.*
- **QUOTE:** *Human relationship is the stage that spotlights our character.*
- **1 John 4:19-21 CEV** - *We love because God loved us first. 20 But if we say we love God and don't love each other, we are liars. We cannot see God. So how can we love God, if we don't love the people we can see? 21 The commandment that God has given us is: "Love God and love each other!"*

- **1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT** - *Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*
- **1 John 4:19 CEV** - *“We love because God loved us first”!*